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NOVEMBER 28, 2025 | VOLUME 16 | ISSUE 25

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Ann Arbor for Public Power ballot initiative: Public power for all! **page 6**

LASHAWN COURTWRIGHT #56

ASK YOUR VENDOR:
**WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE HOLIDAY TREAT?**

# GROUNDCOVER 15

15 YEARS OF NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP | WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICH.

## Effects of mass deportation on community. page 9

Photo by Emily Mills

THIS PAPER WAS BOUGHT FROM

venmo

@groundcovernews, include vendor name and vendor #

# GROUNDCOVER NEWS

**PROVIDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES** FOR SELF-DETERMINED INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED BY POVERTY,
**PRODUCING A STREET NEWSPAPER** THAT GIVES A PLATFORM TO UNDERREPRESENTED VOICES IN WASHTENAW COUNTY,
**PROMOTING AN ACTION** TO BUILD A JUST, CARING AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETY.

Groundcover News, a 501(c)(3) organization, was founded in April 2010 as a means to empower low-income persons to make the transitions from homeless to housed, and from jobless to employed.

Vendors purchase each copy of our regular editions of Groundcover News at our office for 50 cents. This money goes towards production costs. Vendors work selling the paper on the street for $2, keeping all income and tips from each sale. Vendors are the main contributors to the paper, and are compensated to write and report.

Street papers like Groundcover News exist in cities all over the United States, as well as in more than 40 other countries, in an effort to raise awareness of the plight of homeless people and combat the increase in poverty. Our paper is a proud member of the International Network of Street Papers.

International Network *of* Street Papers

SUNDAY
MONDAY
TUESDAY
WEDNESDAY
THURSDAY
FRIDAY
SATURDAY
2026 CALENDARS
OUT NOW!
This wall calendar, filled with vendor photography, is being sold by Groundcover vendors during the holiday season for a chance to make extra money when its needed most. Get one today — for yourself or a loved one — from your favorite vendor.
ONLY $10


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**WAYS TO SUPPORT**

1. **Buy the paper, read the paper.**
2. **Get the word out** — We rely on grassroots marketing. Talk to people about Groundcover and share us with your network.
3. **Volunteer** — You'll learn a lot about our vendors, the newspaper and your community. Interested in volunteering regularly? Fill out the form on our website.
4. **Advertise** your company, organization, event or resource — see rates below.
5. **Follow us on Facebook and Instagram** — promote our posts and share your favorite articles and vendor interactions.
6. **Donate items** — A seasonally appropiate list of items most needed at our office and on the street is available on our website. Drop off anytime we're open.


GROUNDCOVER NEWS ADVERTISING RATES

| Size | Black/White | Color | Dimensions (W x H in inches) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1/8 | $110.00 | $150.00 | 5 X 3 or 2.5 X 6.5 |
| 1/6 | $145.00 | $200.00 | 5 X 4 |
| 1/4 | $200.00 | $265.00 | 5 X 6.25 |
| 1/2 | $375.00 | $500.00 | 5 X 13 or 10.25 X 6.5 |
| full page | $650.00 | $900.00 | 10.25 X 13 |

PACKAGE PRICING

Three Months/Six Issues: **15%** off
Six Months/Twelve Issues: **25%** off
Full Year/Twenty-four Issues: **35%** off
Only run for two weeks/one issue: **40%** off
Additional **20%** discount for money saving coupons




## ASK YOUR VENDOR

### What is your favorite holiday treat?

**Birthday cake.** — Lashawn Courtwright, #56

**Date pudding. Its so good with ice cream!** — Ken Parks #490

**Rum balls.** — Cindy Gere, #279

**The people and the environment.** — Glen Page, #407

**Chocolate.** — Stephanie Dent, #84

**Homemade fudge.** — Andrew White, #560

**Cut-out sugar cookies.** — Shelley DeNeve, #22

**During Thanksgiving, my favorite pie is pecan pie. But it is loaded with sugar ... see my article on page 15.** — Will Shakespeare, #258

**Sweet potato pie with butter pecan ice cream on top.** — Joe Woods, #103

**Peppermint patties.** — Denise Shearer, #485

**Peach cobbler.** — Larzell Washington, #128

# Colorful and festive times

**DENISE SHEARER**
**Groundcover vendor No. 485**

November and December are very beautiful and colorful months. In November the color of the trees is so pretty. In November and December people's houses and offices are decorated so colorful and pretty. These two months are beautiful and colorful when you're inside and when you're outside. Everywhere reminds me of Las Vegas with the colors and lights.

It is a beautiful time to be with people you love, your friends and family. It is also a good time to window shop and just take walks and look at things even if you can't afford to buy them. It's also a good time to go to art museums and libraries and cook delicious meals on a budget.

One good meal I can think of is rice pudding. Another good meal is Chex Mix. You can also make spaghetti that tastes like pizza. Those are a few delicious meals on a budget.

It's fun to do artwork in December and November, even though I do it all year round.

**DS:** What do you like about the months of November and December?

**Jessi Averill, Groundcover volunteer and board member:** I like that it feels like most people are slowing down and taking more time to be with family and close friends.

**DS:** What do you think about Christmas and fall decorations?

**JA:** I like the special colorful lights that people will hang up on the outside of their homes. Inside my home I put together an altar with family and friends who have passed on who I want to remember during this time of year. This is a type of memorial I set up that looks festive like a decoration.

# Gratitude

**KEN PARKS**
**Groundcover vendor No. 490**

When we ponder reality, we may discover that we have choices. What is the best way to become reality focused? Cynicism is a common choice but not a happy one. Nihilism is the mother of cynicism and all forms of "nothing matters." The realization that all actions have results introduces us to the truth of karma. Books have been written on this and Google can be helpful.

What attitude gives us the best approach to experience the fullness of reality? If you have tried different approaches you may have already discovered that gratitude is the best attitude to open the vastness of reality and participate creatively in all the choices available.

If you have learned anything in your studies so far, you know that life is a huge classroom and surprises arise. The best teachers of humanity include Buddha, Jesus, Marx, Einstein and others on a long list of brilliant realized beings. When things don't turn out as planned, you have to look at your assumptions and even change them for new ones.

I think every authentic tradition begins with appreciation for this precious human birth. What is the best way to use this opportunity? To fully realize your potential is a quest of a lifetime. What if you choose to be a fully awakened being with unconditional love for all beings without exception? Buddha and Jesus were in agreement that this is the most worthy choice of all. If your gratitude for this precious human birth is genuinely heartfelt, you will naturally find the teachers who are lineage holders of enlightened traditions.

I had the honor of attending the presentation of James Vukelich during Indigenous Heritage month. His well-prepared presentation with great graphics was on the Seventh Generation and the Seven Teachings of the Grandfathers. Thanksgiving of 2016 at Standing Rock was an expression of the Seventh Generation rising up to stop the Keystone Pipeline going under the Missouri River on unceded land of the Standing Rock nation. There are many offers of programs that promise to take you to success and prosperity. The marketplace is full.

Sincere students of reality will learn that all appearances are impermanent, that change is always happening. You do not have to be perfect to appreciate these basic truths but serious students will soon learn that all actions have results and the karmic accumulation we all carry is a mix of good and bad that goes back to beginningless time. Attachment to anything will burn us out and even backfire as our efforts to determine the results we want run into endless obstacles.

There may be times we get in the flow and our work is fruitful. However, you may have noticed we are not able to cure all the suffering of this world. We may have the intention to cure suffering but not the skillful means. It is good to keep your intention pure and simultaneously notice how habitual patterns sabotage your intention. It becomes apparent that the compliance culture and its bureaucracy continue the genocide that is endemic in global relations. Taxes and waste grow a war system that is out of control. We need to take another look at our everyday life.

Who benefits from our labor? If you read the article from Hamburg, Germany in the October 31 Groundcover you will learn much about the wealth gap and the need to tax the rich. Quite a good article.

I want us to look at wealth as it is being created and begin sharing the wealth there. Gratitude for our creative labor of body, speech and mind is a great asset. An analysis of who contributed is necessary to begin equitable distribution. Some priority would go to those who were most essential in the creation process. The work of people who produce and care for children would get the first share. Workers of the future need to be nurtured so education would be at the head of the line. We need lots of discussion because we are not used to thinking about proper distribution of wealth.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote extensively on this theme and we should pick up from that lineage. They are the source of "From each according to their ability, to each according to their contribution" which evolved to "From each according to their ability, to each according to their need." It will be interesting to pursue this in our everyday life. Contract negotiations take on a new dimension. General strikes will make the point about the importance of labor. We have much to learn about participatory life. We are fortunate to be in the era of history when it is possible to look at freedom in the context of liberated labor. Our gratitude for the creativity we embody will bring "liberty and justice for all." We know these words and have used them smugly as if we have arrived when the journey is just beginning. Take another breath and start fresh.

# Panhandlers vs. street vendors

There are many hustles in the streets of America when it comes to low-income and unhoused people. In the streets of Washtenaw County, you might see the unhoused panhandling or selling Groundcover News to make money.

People might think panhandling and selling street newspapers are the same thing, but they are not. There are a lot of differences between the two street hustles. I thought the same way when I first started selling Groundcover News, but soon I became educated by reading the publication. I learned quickly that I was involved in something much more than making a few bucks. I read an article written by Groundcover writer and vendor William Shakespeare on Ida B. Wells, titled, "Anti-Lynch Crusader." Then I came to learn about Frederick Douglass, an American Abolitionist, and how they both used publications like street newspapers to bring awareness and to make change during turbulent times in American history.

A panhandler is like a rebel without a cause, whereas a street newspaper vendor is representing a cause whether he or she knows it. The main purpose of a street newspaper is to provide employment for the homeless and low-income individuals, and to bring awareness to homelessness, poverty and social justice. Most panhandlers panhandle for their immediate wants and needs. Some panhandlers plead in the name of food, knowing damn well they're going to get some crack (drugs). Don't get me wrong, this is not always the case, because some panhandlers have good intentions and mean well.

**MIKE JONES**
**Groundcover vendor No. 113**

Unlike the street newspaper vendor, the panhandler doesn't have to put money into making money. A newspaper vendor has to pay for the newspapers he or she sells. At Groundcover News the vendor pays fifty cents per newspaper and then resells the newspaper for two dollars, making a $1.50 profit.

Another difference is accountability. The street panhandler has nothing and no one to account to. Whereas the newspaper vendor has not only the street newspaper as an organization to account to but also his fellow vendors.

What most people don't know is that street newspaper vendors are independent contractors who provide valuable information to the community by being a part of production (writings and photos) and newspaper sales.

Groundcover provides the unhoused and those in poverty a platform for their voices and support in Washtenaw County through the publication itself and through social and civil engagements, where vendors can voice their opinion and concerns in civil and public matters that concern the unhoused / low-income community.

Before Groundcover News, when I was unhoused and addicted to drugs and alcohol, I used to panhandle to get what I felt I needed, like food, alcohol and drugs.

As I grew as a man, I got off drugs and alcohol and got a job. I began to regain my sense of pride. I didn't want to have to ask others for food, clothing and shelter. It's in our nature to be independent. As parents we have watched many times our children seek their independence — they don't want to hold your hand when crossing the street, or they want to zip up their own coat. It's normal to seek independence!

There are a lot of unhoused individuals who suffer and have been diagnosed with mental illnesses. Some unhoused mentally ill individuals are on drugs, furthering the problem of mental illness and their unhoused status.

I have been asked several times while selling Groundcover News by customers: "How do I know who to give money to because I don't want to give money to someone who is going to buy drugs with that money?" I always tell them to seek conversation with the unhoused and learn their story. A lot of the unhoused and those with mental illness have few friends, so friendship goes a long way in the unhoused community. Make a friend and assess their needs, and offer aid and assistance where you see fit.

I myself give to people regularly because I know their story. I have been involved in the unhoused community for over 20 years and I learned that by communicating, one can gain a better picture of the unhoused community, and the individual whom you met.

Support street newspaper vendors and the unhoused community!

Happy Holidays!!!

## Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover is a non-profit, and paper vendors are self-employed contractors, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following is our **Vendor Code of Conduct**, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

- Groundcover will be distributed for a voluntary donation. I agree not to ask for more than the cover price or solicit donations by any other means.
- When selling Groundcover, I will always have the current biweekly issue of Groundcover available for customer purchase.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper or selling an issue more than 4 weeks old.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers and refrain from wearing it or other Groundcover gear when engaged in other activities.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover Staff and will not sell to or buy papers from other Groundcover vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.
- I agree to treat all customers, staff, and other vendors respectfully. I will not "hard sell," threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.
- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover.
- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor in downtown areas. I will also abide by the Vendor Corner Policy.
- I understand that Groundcover strives to be a paper that covers topics of homelessness and poverty while providing sources of income for the homeless. I will try to help in this effort and spread the word.

**If you would like to report a violation of the Vendor Code or leave positive review of a Vendor experience please email contact@groundcovernews.com or fill out the contact form on our website.**



# community **EVENTS**

### YPSI ARTISANS HOLIDAY MARKET

Saturday and Sunday, November 29-30, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Ypsilanti Freighthouse, 100 Market Pl.

*Showcasing over 40 Ypsilanti-based small businesses, talented crafters and nonprofit organizations. Discover unique, handcrafted goods and support local artistry while enjoying live entertainment throughout the event. Occuring again Dec. 20-21.*

### "A CHRISTMAS STORY" AT THE MICHIGAN THEATER

Sunday, November 30, 1:30 p.m., Michigan Theater, 603 E Liberty St.

*Delightful, affectionate, and funny memoir of a 1940s childhood and the quest for a BB gun. FREE with reservation at marquee-arts.org.*

### FILM SCREENING | DID YOU GUYS EAT?/¿YA COMIERON?

Monday, December 1, 6:30- 7:45 p.m., AADL downtown, Lower Level Program Room

*"Did You Guys Eat?/¿Ya comieron? Stories of Michigan Agriculture" is a journey into the heart of Mid-Michigan's agricultural landscape — one of the most diverse in the nation. Second only to California in crop variety, Michigan's farms are as varied as the people who work them. This documentary follows the rhythm of the growing season, focusing on the individuals whose labor brings food to our tables: small family farmers, organic growers, and the often-overlooked seasonal migrant workers. Filmmaker Stephany Slaughter will be in attendance.*

### RADICAL UNLEARNING: THE ART AND SCIENCE OF CREATING CHANGE FROM WITHIN

Wednesday, December 3, 6:30 p.m. Literati Bookstore, 124 E. Washington St. Ann Arbor

*North Carolina–based journalist and transgender activist Lewis Raven Wallace discusses his new book about how to challenge deeply held beliefs and ideologies. Free.*

### PRISON CREATIVE ARTS PROJECT ONLINE ART AUCTION

Thursday, December 4 to Friday December 5, online

*The Prison Creative Arts Project (PCAP) brings those impacted by the justice system together with the University of Michigan community for artistic collaboration, mutual learning and growth. The Art Auction Online will raise money for the 30th Annual Exhibition of Artists in Michigan Prisons, the largest and longest-running art show of its kind in the US, featuring hundreds of original, handmade works by incarcerated artists in Michigan. Online bidding link will be posted here at 9 a.m. on December 4: http://myumi.ch/z9x3R. The auction opens at 9 a.m. on December 4th and closes at 11:59 p.m. on December 5th. Artwork may be picked up at the PCAP studio or shipped.*

### MIDNIGHT MADNESS

Friday, December 5, from 5 p.m. - 12 a.m. Main Street, State Street and Kerrytown

*Ann Arbor's beloved downtown holiday shopping event is bigger and better than ever! Midnight Madness returns in all three iconic downtown districts. KindleFest in Kerrytown: This German inspired holiday market features artisans and vendors selling holiday wares, plus live music and kids events. Local food options are available for purchase under the glow of holiday lights.*

### ARTISTS & THEIR TEACHERS: THE POWER OF MENTORSHIP AND THE TRANSFER OF IDEAS

Friday, December 5, from 6 - 9 p.m. CultureVerse Gallery, 309 S. Main St., Ann Arbor

*Artists & Their Teachers: The Power of Mentorship in the Transfer of Ideas will feature seven Artist-Teacher combinations that describe the demonstrable impact of the teaching & learning process. Join A2 Jazz Fest for an opening reception. This event will feature an expansive variety of artistic media, from painting and sculpture to furniture and fashion design.*

### FIRST FRIDAYS YPSI

Friday, December 5, from 5 p.m. - 12 a.m. Downtown Ypsi, Depot Town

*Explore area businesses to shop exclusive discounts, attend pop-up events and galleries featuring Ypsilanti area artists and performers, and experience the Ypsi arts scene in all its forms. This is the last First Friday until April 2026.*

### YPSI FINE ARTS CLUB

Wednesday, December 10, 5-8 p.m. Riverside Arts Center, 64 N. Huron St. Ypsilanti

*Artists, art lovers, collectors, curators — everyone is welcome from Ypsi and beyond! Attendees are not required to present. Anyone is welcome to simply gather with our community and enjoy the incredible artwork. Occurs every two Wednesdays.*

### LIGHT UP THE HOLIDAYS WITH SONG

Thursday, December 11, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Morris Lawrence Building Towsley Auditorium at Washtenaw Community College, 4800 E Huron River Dr, Ann Arbor

*The Ypsilanti Community Choir presents: Light Up the Holidays with Song. Ariel Toews Ricotta will direct selections including The Little Drummer Boy|Peace on Earth, We Need A Little Christmas, Sweet Silent Night, and Deck the Halls.*

### ANN ARBOR CIVIC CHORUS' COMMUNITY HOLIDAY SING

Saturday, December 13, 4:30-5:15 p.m. Kerrytown Farmers Market, 315 Detroit St. Ann Arbor *All are welcome, music and lyrics provided!*

**Submit an event to be featured in the next edition:**
submissions@groundcovernews.com

YPSILANTI DISTRICT LIBRARY
Art on a Journey Gallery Presents
Rachel
Nov 5 - Dec 5
Art on a Journey Gallery is thrilled to present the art of Rachel Perazza. Rachel was born and raised in the Detroit area with a brief time in Puerto Rico. Most of her work is Abstract with some Still Life, but her passion lies mostly in the emotions and thoughts portrayed in the human face. Her hope is that by reflecting these expressions back to the viewer, something can be touched bringing awareness on a much deeper level, therefore initiating change.
Opening Reception Saturday, November 15, 2025, 3 - 5pm
At Ypsilanti District Library - Superior
1900 Harris Road, Ypsilanti 48198
www.ArtOnAJourney.Gallery/Rachel

# What's Happening at the Ann Arbor District Library

**Open 10am–8pm Daily**
Visit any of our five locations across town to browse books, magazines, newspapers, and more. Check out movies, CDs, art prints, musical instruments, or even home tools—you name it! Enjoy fast and free WiFi, study and meeting rooms, and plenty of comfortable spaces to relax or hang out.

**Fifth Ave Press**
AADL founded Fifth Avenue Press in 2017 to support the local writing community and promote the creation of original content. The imprint publishes works by authors who live in Washtenaw County. Consider submitting your finished manuscript to Fifth Avenue Press today at fifthave.aadl.org.

**Unusual Stuff to Borrow**
There's more to borrow at AADL than books, music, and movies. To name a few, there are games, telescopes, stories-to-go kits, and home tools. Check out these unusual yet handy items during your next library visit.

**FEATURED EVENT**

**Saturday, December 13 • 11 AM–6 PM • Downtown Library**
Tiny Expo features over 75 artists & crafters selling handmade wares in the lobby of the Downtown Library! Our annual show is a great way to support your community and find unique gifts. Learn more at aadl.org/tinyexpo.

# Ann Arbor for Public Power ballot initiative: all power to the people!

**JIM CLARK**
**Groundcover vendor No. 139**

Some people would say Detroit Edison — DTE — is unclean, unreliable and unaffordable. The members of A2P2, Ann Arbor for Public Power, share that sentiment. Ann Arbor for Public Power is a group of neighbors who decided they were fed up with the abuse of Big Power on the environment and the community. In November 2026, A2P2 plans to take the first step in taking the power back from DTE and put control of energy in the hands of the people who depend on it.

I interviewed Brian Geiringer, the Executive Director of A2P2, to learn more about the organization and their ballot initiative. If passed, the initiative will establish a board of directors that will begin the process of taking over the management of Ann Arbor's electricity supply.

"Tell me about A2P2," I asked.

"Ann Arbor for Public Power is an org that started in 2020 with the purpose of getting rid of DTE entirely," Brian stated. "The first thing the organizers looked at was the city of Ann Arbor's A2ZERO Plan for Sustainability, which is a 10-year plan to produce net zero emissions from electricity by 2030. What they found is that most of the electricity emissions, and most of Ann Arbor's electricity, is from Detroit Edison. So in order for Ann Arbor to be net zero on electricity, we have to be free from DTE."

Brian went on to say that the organizers decided to exercise the rights given in the state constitution to take ownership of the electricity. Notable members and supporters of A2P2, such as Jeff Irwin, Yousef Rabhi and Michelle Deatrick, agree that having Ann Arbor run its own electricity, the same way it runs its own water, can help achieve 100% renewable energy.

"I did a little bit of research on how power is generated," I stated. "What I'm not clear on, though, is doesn't DTE own all the infrastructure, like the machines that make the electricity and the wires that transport it?"

"Good question," Brian replied, "it's very weird. DTE does energy generation, mostly on the east side of the state, and then also does distribution; those are two separate entities. There's also actually a go-between, The Midcontinent Independent System Operator. This is what we call "the grid." MISO is a non-profit that manages electricity transmission across large regions."

Then I wanted to know, "What if somebody bought a farm and put windmills on it for the purpose of generating electricity for a small town like Dexter or Chelsea?"

Brian answered, "Well, if they did it for Dexter, they'd have to sell it to DTE, and then DTE would sell it back to them because of the infrastructure. Or they can create their own internal city-generated electricity like Ann Arbor did with the Sustainable Energy Utility which allows residents to produce and consume energy generated by solar panels and battery storage systems within the city." (If it was done in Chelsea, it would be a different situation because Chelsea actually has a municipal electrical utility.)

"Couldn't the Dexter solar/wind farm install their own poles and wires?" I asked.

"Yes, the city [would allow the farm to have] that power," Brian replied. "It is prohibitively expensive but the city can force DTE to sell their poles and wires. That is in the state constitution."

"How would they do that?" I asked

Brian answered, "It requires a 60% vote. The city would take out basically a giant loan in the form of a bond. They would buy all the poles and wires. Then that big loan would be paid back through people's actual electric bills over 30 years."

Brian expanded on the larger vision of community-supplied electricity. "There's also a huge benefit in decentralization of energy generation. If the whole Southeast Michigan region relies on five major power plants, then big chunks of it or the whole thing can go down if only a few key places fail. But if every neighborhood has a solar array and a mini-windmill, then if your neighborhood goes out, you can come to my house. If mine goes out, I can go to your house, because they're independent of each other. And properly networked, you could have half of it go out, but be able to share electricity from other active sources."

Brian continued, "I think that the different municipalities could coordinate. There are some things about electricity that benefit from greater coordination, for sure. Like how to put in substations and that sort of thing. So I assume they would coordinate. And I should say it could also be coordinated at a statewide level or at a national level."

"It sounds like you're talking about rendering DTE obsolete by creating power on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis," I asked.

"Yes," Brian said with emphasis.

"Is that what the ballot initiative is about?"

"Yes," Brian answered, "in 2026, A2P2 is running a ballot initiative that will be voted on in the November election.

"It will create the democratic hybrid board of the future public electric utility. We want to make sure that the future public power is run with at least some democratic control. So in 2026, if we're successful in passing the ballot initiative, the city will begin the process of creating that board. Then in 2028, every ward will elect one person to the public electric board and the city council would appoint four people. Finally a nine-person public power board would be created in 2028 that would gear up the city to actually take over [electricity production]. So it's going to be exciting; it's going to be *very* exciting."

"We talk about housing, and how housing should be free, but I mean, housing isn't much without power, so shouldn't power be free?" I asked.

"I told someone one time that I thought electricity was a human right," Brian agreed.

Then I said, "As an environmentalist I reconciled the need for electricity a long time ago, because a basic human need is heat. If you're in temperatures that cause hypothermia, you can only go three hours without proper heat. So, in the wintertime, you have to have a fuel source. We used to burn wood, but with modern technology we can harness heat from the sun and spit it out through a space heater. Electricity keeps our hot food hot and cold food cold."

Brian added, "Not having AC can be life-threatening in Phoenix. Not to mention, there's tons of people who rely on electricity to stay alive through health-aid machines."

According to reporting by Crain's Detroit Business, DTE and Consumers Energy faced heightened scrutiny after widespread outages in 2023. This is no surprise as DTE is a publicly-traded for-profit corporation. Substandard response in a crisis is probably due to preserving the bottom line. Paying employees overtime is an expense capitalists try to avoid.

"Do you remember in 2021," Brian began, "this big winter storm hit Texas and a bunch of people died? It was the worst winter storm they'd ever had. The grid had been neglected in favor of corporate profits enjoyed by the Texas energy moguls. The grid failed. People died. I'm scared of that happening here."

Brian continued exposing the profit motive of the corporation. "DTE is sending 15% of every one of your bills straight to Wall Street, straight to shareholders. And more of it is spent on executive salaries, more of it is spent on advertising, even though they have a monopoly, and a bunch of it is spent on lobbying against climate-positive legislation as far away as California."

At the time of writing, November 20, one share of DTE stock was worth $135. Meanwhile, a growing number of Michigan residents are unable to pay their electric bills. The risk is rising due to a recent halt in LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) funding. LIHEAP normally helps more than 400,000 Michigan households cover utility costs, and without it many families have been pushed closer to disconnection.

If the ballot initiative passes, Ann Arbor residents can expect fewer and shorter outages, eventual lower prices, and net zero emissions. The money collected from bills goes directly to keep the system up-to-date and pay the people doing the work to keep it running.

"How can people help with the ballot initiative?" I asked.

Brian replied, "A2P2 is going to be collecting signatures to get on the ballot, as early as January. And then there will be months of signature collection. And then it'll turn into a campaign to make sure everyone votes yes to create the public power board. So people should go to the website and volunteer to help get rid of DTE."

I offered Brian a challenge. "Let's say that you're out in front of Meijer, you're standing out there and you're collecting signatures, and you've got five seconds to say what you're about to somebody to get their signature. Go."

Brian launches his pitch. "Okay, so we want to get rid of DTE. We can generate our own electricity that is cheaper, more reliable, and with more renewable energy. So sign on today to make that happen!"

*Connect more with Ann Arbor for Public Power by visiting their website* annarborpublicpower.org/



# Pregnant residents and parents of newborns in Ypsilanti can apply for temporary Unqualified Basic Income December 1st

Photo courtesy of the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation.

**TONY**
**Groundcover contributor**

Starting at 9 a.m. December 1, 2025, pregnant residents of Ypsilanti, and those with newborns born on or after December 1 can apply for RxKids (rxkids.org); an unqualified basic income program. The program provides $1,500 during pregnancy, and $500 per month for six to 12 months of a newborn's new life.

Unqualified basic income is undeniably effective at increasing quality of life and addressing the immediate needs of those in poverty. Giving people basic income benefits entire communities far more than what it costs. The RxKids program has been operating elsewhere in the state of Michigan and evidence shows improvements for the entire community, such as lower rates of postpartum depression and lower rates of eviction.

New and/or expecting parents who receive this income will lift the economy of Ypsilanti, both in the true measure of the purchasing power of the people, and the more common false measure of how much capital is being passed between wealthy parties.

In its $81 billion 2025 budget, the state of Michigan granted $270 million to the program. The Senate Fiscal Analysis Agency estimates funding maximum payouts statewide would cost $750 million. Private funding is currently baked into the program.

"Each community where Rx Kids operates must contribute philanthropic money," Sneha Dhandapani reported on her interview with co-director Luke Shaefer in "Michigan Public." (www.michiganpublic.org/health/2025-10-08rx-kids-gets- 270-million-in-new-state-budget)

RxKids, though brief and insufficient, is a limited implementation of a universal basic income (UBI). (The current program is called unqualified basic income because it is not universal.) UBI is likely to play a major role in all our lives going forward. Giving people money is a direct solve to poverty, it is the most effective medicine for the symptom, though we dare not neglect the underlying disease.

If we don't address the root causes of poverty, this and other UBI programs will: continue to be underfunded public-private partnerships, become means-tested, be bound within layers of unnecessary hierarchy and bureaucracy, and eventually be eliminated.

Many social safety nets have already suffered this fate and the remainder are sliding down this pipeline. When the Black Panthers fed school children for free, they were shut down and replaced with the far inferior product of "free and reduced school lunches" where people in poverty are forced to prove how poor they are before the state will let their kids eat.

If we all agreed that everyone deserves to eat, there would be no crisis when the federal government cuts food funding. We would not worry if benefits are cut off because the children would be fed as a certainty, regardless of politicians and billionaires.

Our need for social safety nets is increasing. Poverty is increasing. Our hamstrung social safety nets that require means-testing, with complex applications and byzantine mazes of hoops to jump through on dysfunctional websites and in soul-sucking waiting rooms, are not enough.

UBI is giving people a life without demanding they earn it. It's as obvious and evident that UBI eliminates poverty as it is that abolishing rent solves homelessness. If you don't want people to be poor, pay them. If you don't want people to be homeless, let them have homes.

UBI improves people's material conditions and enables people to survive the growing automation of work. However the so-called philanthropists funding UBI research and the political system driving UBI policy are the root cause of poverty. Every Ypsilantian who gets this money is getting a fraction of what they're owed in stolen labor value and unjust rent.

As someone who wants to see as much wealth redistributed into as many hands as possible for the sake of all our survival, I have a few concerns about the future of this project.

"RxKids is a program of Michigan State Public Health Initiative, in collaboration with Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan and administered by GiveDirectly." - rxkids.org

My minor concern is that this is a research project. Researchers want data. The methodology of researchers creating a usable dataset, and the methodology of social workers trying to deliver the maximum assistance to the maximum number of people, are not the same. What is in the best interest of the people and what produces the most valuable dataset are not always going to be the same. This contradiction in interest is something to keep an eye on.

RxKids' published data appears to be gathered at the community level, with local statistics before and after the program is run and compared to communities that didn't get the income. There is a risk of well-meaning scientists standing in the way of humanitarian support that people desperately need, to improve their dataset, and other malpractices for the sake of the publishing motive.

The data, as you may expect, show UBI creates a wealth of material benefits for communities from reduced poverty to healthier people. You can find the project's published papers on their website, rxkids.org/impact/research/rx-kids-publications/ I cannot stress enough how beneficial it is to Ypsilanti for every eligible new parent and pregnant Ypsilantian to apply for this income on December 1!

My major concern is philanthropy capitalism. Billionaires do not have good intentions toward people. Reducing poverty is contrary to their agenda. Poverty exists as a result of their wealth extraction. Poverty is the void left by their thievery.

Philanthropist billionaires who stole and sold your data, who extract billions from underpaid workers, and those who continue to do so see UBI as a replacement for traditional social safety nets like SNAP and Social Security. They know UBI is a tool we need to survive in the automation paradigm they are creating, that they've dragged us all into, and they want to control it.

They want to own it long enough to eliminate our existing social safety nets, then eliminate it. Similar to how Microsoft will "Embrace, Extend, and Extinguish" social software standards, the wealthy embrace, undermine and extinguish social safety nets.

The easiest way for capitalist greed to corrupt social safety nets into profit extractors is with public-private partnerships. Public-private partnerships — from Section 8 housing to localized monopolies — bandage over fallout from the ever-widening wealth gap while exacerbating the root cause.

Billionaires exist only because of labor value stolen from underpaid workers, and the property taxes in politician's budgets are paid for with ever-ratcheting unjust rents. Of all the money missing from your paycheck, and all the money you lose to the landlord, they're willing to give a tiny fraction back; it gives them clout at parties and makes them all richer in the long run.

There's mud in the pie, but it's not a mud pie.

RxKids is a research project feeding tech billionaires data they use to take more control over our social safety nets. RxKids is a public-private partnership between the state and the wealthy creators of poverty.

RxKids will help people. The program already is helping people. I want to see it expanded, owned and led by the people, and I want to see it signed into law that forever going forward Michigan will pay universal basic income to all newborns, not for six-to-twelve months, but for their entire lives.

The billionaires can afford it, they owe it to us, and it's the state's most basic responsibility to seize their blood money and return it to us in full. We won't let them starve, we aren't them.

In the meantime, if you are eligible apply December 1!

# Sgt. Shannon continues to serve by filling veteran service gaps

**DAVID MITCHELL**
**Groundcover vendor No. 661**

Many Ann Arbor residents identify with the wonderful lyrics of the historic fight song for the University of Michigan and think of our community as "The Victors!" Yes, we are the home of many great achievements and the home for many of the best schools, public safety and social services available in this entire country. Despite all of the reasons for raising our fists and pounding our chest with pride, the question still remains, "Is our VA Hospital failing our victors?"

Hidden behind all of the beauty, power and pride that surrounds our county, Washtenaw is home to a Veterans Administration Hospital (VA) serving over 70,000 veterans living in Southeast Michigan. One would think that in a world-class country, and a world-class county, our veterans would receive world-class service. Unfortunately this is not the case. Despite what seems to be overwhelming need, our VA Hospital only has 102 acute care and inpatient beds. To add fuel to the fire, our VA Healthcare System only offers a 40-bed community living center and a clinical building for outpatient, diagnostic and surgical services.

This paints a dark picture of our country and our county. The unacceptably low amount of resources that are made available for the countless brave men and women who have devoted and dedicated their lives for this great country fall far beneath our nation's mission, vision and promise.

Now in every dark painting there shines a light, and this light is found in the life, love and lessons taught by Sergeant Stephanie J. Shannon of the United States Army. Sgt. Shannon served and continues to serve this country with great honor, commitment and sacrifice. As the founder of Michigan Women Veterans Empowerment (MIWVE), Sgt. Shannon is on the tip of the spear in the daily battle against homelessness, food insecurity and the abandonment of our youth. MIWVE's mission is "to identify, connect, educate, advocate, support and empower all military veterans, service members, their families and the youth in the 8 dimensions of wellness (emotional, financial, environmental, intellectual, occupational, physical, social and spiritual)." As a true visionary leader, Sgt. Shannon knows what needs to be done and leads from her heart as she is led by the Spirit of Almighty God to achieve what might seem impossible. This battle-hardened wounded warrior has returned to civilian life with her boots on the ground.

Sgt. Shannon is a proud graduate of Grand Valley State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology. With the powerful combination of her battlefield training and her creative brain power, Sgt. Shannon deploys her knowledge of proven strategic tactics to address the major problems facing our country today. The MIWVE program is just one of a number of groundbreaking initiatives that have made Sgt. Shannon a sought-after keynote speaker for organizations and institutions throughout Washtenaw County and across the United States. Her message is clear: let's not just talk about our problems, but let's do something about them at the same time. No matter who you are or where you live in this country, as long as there is breath in your body and blood flowing through your veins it is never too late to get into the fight.

I encourage you to join the fight by partnering with Sgt. Shannon and sharing your time and energy to stand side by side with a warrior whose words work. Sgt. Shannon is a published author of two books, and she is working on a third as a part of a national book tour in 2026. You can find out more about joining the fight against veteran homelessness by raising your right hand and signing up to serve as a volunteer with this great organization that makes a daily difference in the lives of people, including young people, from all walks of life.

We are influenced each day by news reports of our government shutting down the very services that built this great country. Now, you have the opportunity to stand up and share your voice in support of the issues and programs that are being taken away by our current leadership in Washington, DC. If you are tired of sitting back and watching the dismantling of our jobs, services and possibly our very freedom as Americans, join Sgt. Shannon and speak out and fight the good fight of faith.

You can find Sgt. Shannon via her website (empowermiwomenvets.com/) and schedule a personal consultation to learn how you can join in the fight against veteran homelessness. Through activities like an honor guard and drill team, Sgt. Shannon leads our youth with great honor and discipline. Through her great sacrifice Sgt. Shannon serves on the front lines of youth leadership development in our county and around the country.

You might think that you are too old to be a part of this solution, but you are never too old to join the fight, even if that means rolling up your sleeves and writing a hefty check in support of the great work being done on the front lines by Sgt. Shannon. Your donation to this world-class nonprofit organization will literally change and sustain lives. During a time in which our wounded warriors are often pushed by the wayside and shunned, you can join Sgt. Shannon as she speaks out against many of the key issues that plague our community, our county and our entire country — sharing her battle-tested reflections from the heart of a wounded warrior.

Your generous donations will allow you to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Sgt. Shannon. In addition to your financial support, you may also choose to join by serving as a volunteer. I invite you to join forces with Sgt. Shannon to become a part of an unbeatable team. Contact Sgt. Shannon today and donate your time to bring an end to veteran homelessness, while helping to develop our young people, the future leaders of the world.

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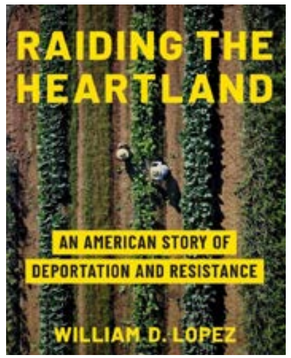
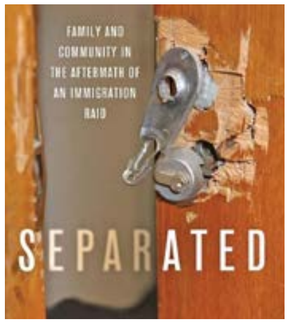
# Effects of mass deportation on community

**HANNAH BLYVEIS**
**U-M student contributor**

**Dr. Bill Lopez, U-M Professor of Public Health and Poverty Solutions advisor has written two books on the impact of deportations on community.**




The University of Michigan's Poverty Solutions Speaker Series is open to the public and engages with critical issues related to poverty. On Friday, Oct. 17, I attended a talk by Dr. William Lopez discussing mass deportation and its effects on communities.

Dr. Lopez, Clinical Associate Professor of Public Health and Faculty Associate in Latina/o Studies at the University of Michigan, is an accomplished author. One thing that makes him stand out is his emphasis on truly connecting with the communities he works with. Because of these connections, he is able to hear and record compelling firsthand accounts that illustrate the consequences of deportation in a raw, genuine way.

He earned degrees in psychology, public health and health behavior/education from Notre Dame, University of Texas Health Science Center, and U-M. His research centers on how immigration enforcement and structural racism affect health.

Dr. Lopez largely drew from his research on immigration and deportation resistance for his two books, "Separated: Family and Community in the Aftermath of an Immigration Raid" and "Raiding the Heartland: An American Story of Deportation and Resistance." These personal stories formed the core of both his writing and presentation.

At the beginning of his talk, Dr. Lopez described the effects of mass deportation, using examples from worksite raids — contrasting the common language and conception of deportation. The biggest emphasis was "community members do not stand by idly when their neighbors are deported, instead communities resist." This quote captured the heart of his research and set the tone for the rest of his lecture, emphasizing collective strength in the face of fear.

One way this resistance appeared was local faith-based and other organizations coming together to support affected families. Dr. Lopez also spoke about how schools and teachers struggled to help students after raids. He shared the story of a teacher named Leah. "It's weird, it's one of those defining moments. It was like, I remember what happened when 9-11 happened. I remember stuff like when the Challenger blew up, the space shuttle. This is one of those things," Leah said.

She was describing the weight on teachers that comes from feelings of responsibility for students' well-being. Some children continued attending school daily, while others missed significant time after losing parents or facing trauma. These absences created learning gaps that teachers were left to bridge.

Dr. Lopez's statistics help humanize those affected. For example, one in 20 people in the United States live in mixed status households, and about two-thirds of undocumented immigrants have lived here for over 10 years. These numbers show how deportation uproots people who have already built deep roots and relationships and are entrenched in their communities. Regardless of political stance, these stories humanize those impacted. His talk critically examined the nature and tactics of the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency while highlighting the unity and resistance within communities under threat.

One example from his research was in Bean Station, Tennessee, a small city of about 3,000 people with a small but significant Hispanic population. These people make up a chunk of the store owners and customers, as they have deep roots here. When a worksite raid occurred there, 97 people were detained. While not all were deported, the lives and families of these individuals were deeply affected. He highlighted that in the days after the raid, local teachers reported student absences jumping from around 75 on a typical day to over 530. This spike showed how much fear and disruption the raid created, especially for Hispanic students whose grades and health suffered.

Dr. Lopez shared several powerful examples of community resilience. Churches, food banks and local groups mobilized to provide childcare, meals and emotional support for those left behind. He also described the grievances regarding the tactics used by immigration authorities: the suddenness of arrests, the lack of clear information, and the inadequate conditions in detention centers. These details revealed how structural systems disrupted people's daily lives beyond the statistics.

He also touched on *mass* deportation rather than deportation in general. He briefly acknowledged how the Trump administration carried out around 1.5 million deportations so far, compared to nearly five million during Obama's presidency and just over four million under Biden. Dr. Lopez, however, was less highlighting the numbers themselves and more on the aggressiveness of current enforcement tactics and their lasting emotional impact on families.

Overall, this was a valuable opportunity. It was a welcoming environment for diverse viewpoints, but still grounded in empathy and evidence. Dr. Lopez's research revealed not just the suffering caused by deportation, but also the resilience and solidarity that arise in response. I'm grateful I had the opportunity to listen to his speech; it had eye-opening and very humanizing aspects that brought this issue to light.

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# from the ARCHIVES

15 YEARS OF NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP

## Reflecting on the first snow

**REV. MARTHA BRUNELL**
**Groundcover contributor**

The first snow falls, not so silently. Large, wet flakes crackle through withered leaves clinging to the linden's branches. They encase hollow milkweed pods below. Or they fall with little ceremony or grace in splotches on the empty deck. When the splotches blur into one another, they provide evidence of where I have walked out to greet this snow's appearance.

The first snow tends to surprise even if the weather reporter proclaimed with certainty it was coming. It rarely arrives on the day appointed for winter's beginning, exhibiting little need to honor the calendar's numbering of days. Snow accumulates, and I mount a search for my mitten's missing mate. The shortening of daylight is evident. Time marches on, past those who dread the dawning season and those who welcome it.

A fresh start is thrilling. This one, however, harbors the creeping fear of unknown days and nights ahead that may have to be crossed on wet roads quickly turned into slippery ice by the bite of a prairie wind. When I was young and very resilient in the winter, I worked with elders in Boston for whom the first snow signaled the long season inside when they were held virtually captive in their small living spaces, unable to navigate the sidewalks their absentee landlords rarely cleared of snow. We labor in the winter from inside to outside and back in again as we don and shed all those layers.

Winter's weeks harbor memories of a successful neighborhood effort to engineer a childhood igloo and fast sled rides down any number of hills. Snow shrouding the nighttime streets of cities I have lived in has often softened sharp urban edges, suggesting an aesthetic unity in marked contrast to the conflicts of the day.

In the early weeks of winter decades ago, I waited for the birth of both my daughters. I relive the joy of that waiting to this day. Now my older daughter is married to Carmelo, whose first country was Nicaragua. He is still in disbelief that winter is necessary. Where I currently live, winter's frozen fog ushers in a magical land that sparkles and shimmers.

Winter draws from us ambivalence. There are the comforting smells of homemade soup, balsam and baking spices alongside the persistence of inadequate shelter for those who are without. There can be a stillness that counterbalances our hurried lives and an unrelenting grayness that starves our spirits. Some neighbors have the means to escape winter's reign if they choose; others hunker in to survive its duration. Winter reminds us of limits we are wise to honor. We both struggle with and rejoice in the cancellations it brings.

Winter is crossing the year's threshold again, ready or not. It invites us to be more aware of the struggles of those whose vulnerability increases in the dark and cold and of how we might respond effectively with compassion. This season urges us not to forget that growth is going on, even far beneath the surface where all appears dead and gone. Perhaps, this year, together, we can increase our capacity to thrive through the challenges hinted at once more with the first snow falling.

*Rev. Martha Brunell was the pastor at Bethlehem United Church of Christ during the early years of Groundcover News. She was a community advocate for the paper and frequent, beloved contributor of essays.*

*Originally published in the December 2017 edition of Groundcover News.*

## When the snow falls

**LA SHAWN COURTWRIGHT**
**Groundcover vendor No. 56**

Chills of wonder spread all over me
I mean the idea of sliding down a hill on my sled
A ride on my ATV, snow board, or my snowmobile
Maybe even build a snow woman or snowman that looks and dresses like me
Or have a snowball battle with my frenemies
When the snow falls
I wanna get out my snow blower
So I can move the snow over
from in front of my garage and house entry and exit doors
I've got to clear the sidewalks too
So that my children can make it
to the bus stop for school
When the snow falls
It's cool to just look out
of my window and watch it come down
at whatever rate it may fall
When the snow falls
A warm snuggle will definitely do!!
Most of all
When the snow falls
I just want to be with you!!

**Bethlehem United Church of Christ**
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10:00 am In-person
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# My head, the enemy: Peer Center provides support

**JULIA HERZOG**
**Apropos**

*Apropos is a street newspaper in Salzburg, Austria. Translated from German via Translators Without Borders. Courtesy of Apropos / INSP.ngo*

Courtesy of Peer Centre Salzburg

On a large table in the parish hall in Zell am See are eight plates, plus bright red and green cups. In the middle, there is a blue flask with hot water and a breadbasket of fresh pastries, butter, jam and a jar of Nutella.

At the lovingly prepared table, peer workers Elke Hollaus and Hannes Motal wait every first and third Monday of the month for the participants of a conversation group for people with mental illness. The offer of conversation in the morning helps to give the day a structure. At breakfast together, people talk and feel that they are welcome. "The conversation groups are for people who suffer from a mental illness or are currently in a life crisis," explained Motal, chair of the association.

Around 15 people gather here in the parish hall in Zell am See twice per month. Hollaus looks after the group together with a colleague from Salzburg. The conversation groups are primarily about states of mind, about feelings. "I ask people what they have done this week, how they feel in everyday life, and sometimes I can also offer something from my experience."

Motal suffered a severe burn-out in 2018. At that time, he worked between 12 and 16 hours a day as a self-employed sound engineer at major events throughout Europe. "My last job was for Swarovski. When I got home, I fell over, and that was it. I was completely empty." That was on New Year's Eve.

He was admitted to hospital for 10 days. "I couldn't walk anymore and was shaking all over. I thought I would never be able to walk again. I used a walker for 10 days. At 56." For some, his stories about the severe physical complaints that mental illness can trigger are difficult to imagine. "You have to imagine that you can no longer walk because your head no longer cooperates. That's the bad thing about it, that your head becomes your biggest enemy."

Reading a book or listening to music became an impossible effort for Motal, all external stimulus overwhelming. "I got panic attacks. It was all too loud, too much."

Hannes Motal is not going back to his former profession. During rehab in St. Veit, the Viennese native fell in love with Salzburg and stayed. What Motal did not suspect at the time was that his ordeal would later qualify him to support people experiencing similar mental crises face-to-face. This is because all Peer Center employees have experienced mental illness themselves. This makes the nine volunteers first-hand experts.

"Before you lead a group, you take part in a conversation group six times. After that, you lead the group three times together with an assessor," said Motal. The group leader moderates and creates a good atmosphere for conversation.

During our conversation, seven people have gathered around the breakfast table in the Zell vicarage. Motal places a pack of cards on the table. "Mood Cards" is written on the packaging in bold letters. "Would someone like to draw a card and talk to us a bit?"

A participant raises his hand and leafs through the deck. Each card depicts a face showing an emotion such as fear, joy or anger. After a short search, the man finds what he is looking for and places a card on the table in front of him. He begins to talk and shares with the group how he feels today.

"The mood cards help to interpret one's own feelings. You draw a card for the mood you are currently in. Then you choose a card with the mood you might prefer. It's an aid for positive feelings," Motal explained.

While the participant speaks, the others also get involved and talk about themselves. A conversation quickly ensues — a togetherness in which experiences are shared and topics are discussed together. "Basically, the groups are always about the aggregate states of being human that everyone knows," explained Motal.

The peer colleague moderates the groups. Openness is the basis for work in the Peer Center. "Our task is to provide a listening ear. We throw questions into the circle that result in a conversation. People can take something away from this pool of information."

It is important to the Peer Center to distinguish it from group therapy or psychotherapeutic help. "We don't provide therapy; we listen and moderate the conversation," Motal said. Peer colleagues are subject to the strictest duty of confidentiality.

The atmosphere of the Peer Center in the city of Salzburg also brightens the mood. The group room is friendly; the walls are sunny yellow. They are spaces that hold you and enable a safe arrival. "Before people take part in a group for the first time, they sometimes come to us for a one-on-one conversation. They look at the rooms and ask questions."

Those who turn to the Peer Center have often already had a long ordeal behind them. During the first contact, colleagues make them feel that they are meeting as equals, talking with someone who has also experienced illness and knows the suffering of a mental crisis.

"In the city, the conversation groups with breakfast take place on Wednesdays and Fridays, and every Thursday there is a conversation group with creativity. Individual conversations are also possible by telephone arrangement," says Motal.

In addition to the conversation groups, the Peer Center also has space for activities — such as sharing coffee and biscuits for people who are alone at Christmas. Last year, for example, employees and participants took part in a winter hike and carriage ride in Lungötz, a guided tour of the Salzburg Festival Halls and a joint hike to the Zwölferhorn in St. Gilgen. "Seeing people having fun together, taking part in mindfulness exercises and creating new friendships, never ceases to amaze our team. The project days are something very special," said Motal.

The Peer Center is supported by the state and city of Salzburg. The entire range of conversation groups via individual conversations and excursions can be used without registration, free of charge and anonymously. On request, a social worker also accompanies those affected to offices.

Once per month, Motal travels to the Kardinal-Schwarzenberg-Klinikum to present the work of the Peer Center in Pongau as well. "It is important to me to make our work visible and to reach as many people as possible who could benefit from it," he said.

Networking and exchange also take place in the form of trialogues. These are open conversation circles for those affected by mental illnesses, relatives and experts from the psychiatric field. The trialogues in the province of Salzburg are coordinated by the AHA (Relatives Help Relatives) and take place regularly, covering different topics such as shame, loneliness or mourning.

When Hannes Motal talks about the activities of the Peer Center, it becomes clear that in addition to providing support in everyday life, the association is also concerned with raising awareness of mental health. Seeking help is the biggest hurdle for many people facing mental crises. This is where the Peer Center wants to start, to help to remove taboos from topics related to mental illness.

As far as society's handling of mental illness is concerned, Motal would like to see more awareness. "My illness resulted in a whole host of problems. I couldn't work anymore and had a hard time getting out of bed. And, of course, it would be nice if there was more understanding and support from the those around us."

For Motal himself, it was important to be as open as possible about his illness. "I would never have believed myself to be mentally ill. I always liked to work a lot until it wasn't possible anymore." Today, he stands by his experience of mental illness: "That was an important part of my recovery — admitting that I had an illness."

One story that Motal likes to tell in the conversation groups is about the small steps that he has taken on his personal path to recovery. After his 10-day hospital stay in 2018, he couldn't leave his apartment for two months. His sense of being overwhelmed and his fear of the outside world were too great.

Every day, he sat on his balcony and watched the birds in the garden. "In a bush there was a nest with small birds. One chick always hopped out, looked around and hopped back in. I watched for a week as it went a little further from its nest every day. One day, it finally flew off, and I thought to myself: I can do that too."

Motal left his apartment and sat down on the stairs in front of his house. "The first two days, I went straight back

see **PEER CENTER** page 16

# Silent virtue: being good is a good in itself

**PEDRO CAMPOS**
**Groundcover vendor No. 652**

In "The Republic," Plato, through the voice of Socrates, builds one of the most profound defenses of the just and virtuous life. The dialogue centers on the question of what justice is, and whether the just man is happier than the unjust one.

Faced with the provocations of Thrasymachus and Glaucon, who argue that injustice can be more advantageous when it goes undiscovered, Socrates maintains the opposite: that being good is a good in itself, not a means to reputation, power or pleasure. Virtue does not need applause; it only needs to exist.

For Socrates, the human soul has three parts — reason, spirit and desire — and justice consists in the harmony among them. To be just is to live in inner balance, with each part fulfilling its function under the guidance of reason. Just as a city is well-ordered when each group performs its role without encroaching on the others, a person is good when they master themselves and act according to the good as known by the mind. The unjust man, though he may appear to triumph, lives in inner disorder, enslaved by passions and fears. His soul is a city at war.

The good life, therefore, is one in which a person is self-sufficient. Socrates shows, through his conduct and his words, that true happiness lies in needing little and in living with coherence between thought, speech and action. He sleeps wherever necessity finds him, dresses simply, seeks neither wealth nor honors, but uprightness of character. His greatness lies not in what he has, but in what he is. As Alcibiades says in "The Symposium," Socrates "slept anywhere, ate whatever was available, and feared neither cold nor heat;" he was a free man because he lacked nothing.

To be good without displaying it is the pinnacle of virtue. The truly just person does not need others' approval to act rightly. He understands that goodness is a form of wisdom, and that vice is born of ignorance. The fool seeks to appear good; the wise seek only to be good. Socrates teaches that integrity is silent and coherence is the highest form of intelligence: to act according to reason, uncorrupted by pride, desire or vanity.

Socratic humility is not submission but inner strength. It arises from awareness of one's own limits — the famous "I know that I know nothing" — and leads to self-mastery and tolerance. One who understands his ignorance does not seek to dominate but to understand, does not judge but dialogues, does not impose but questions. It is through this constant exercise of self-examination and moderation that a person draws near to true freedom.

In "The Republic," Socrates proposes that if the just and the unjust were subjected to the same trials, the former would remain at peace with himself, while the latter would be consumed inwardly. Justice is, therefore, a form of the soul's health. Just as a sick body suffers even without visible wounds, the unjust soul decays even under the appearance of success. The just man, on the other hand, possesses serenity, balance and contentment — and is happy even in poverty, obscurity or adversity.

The Socratic thesis is radical and at the same time liberating: a person's worth is not measured by others' gaze, but by the inner harmony between what one thinks, says and does. Glory and fame are shadows; virtue is substance. The true triumph is to be good in silence, just without witnesses and honest without reward.

In a world that values appearances, Socrates' lesson remains as current and necessary as ever. To be just, wise and moderate is to resist the tyranny of the ego. It is to choose to live for the common good, not for applause. It is, finally, to understand that a virtuous soul is the only treasure that neither time, nor power, nor death can corrupt. *Follow @pedrocamposbrazil on Instagram*

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# A woman's worth

**JOCELIN BOYD**
**Groundcover vendor No. 85**

A woman's worth is valuable like diamonds and gold.
Her soul is pure beauty.
She's the queen of her castle.
Her words are compassionate and loving.
She draws boundaries without guilt.
A woman can embrace her strength.
A woman's worth is endless.

# The earth

**SHAWN SWOFFER**
**Groundcover vendor No. 574**

The sun shines and brightens up the earth.
The earth's so vast and so pure.
The sky blankets the earth.
Waves crashing out onto the sand.
The grass and the prairies so beautiful.
Prairie dogs peeking out from under the earth.
Eagles flying across the cannons and mountain tops.
Wolves coming out from the caves.
The earth, so beautiful, so unique, so original.



# transit **RESOURCE CORNER**

**AATA'S "THE RIDE"**
734-996-0400
Serves the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti Area. Regular bus routes operated via a pay-per-ride system ($1.50 fare). Offers discounts for seniors (free), youth, as well as low-income (half-fare) and disabled people (see A-Ride). Downtown workers, ask your employers about Go!Pass.
**Eastern Michigan University:** Students, faculty and staff members can visit Service EMU in the Student Center to purchase 30-day unlimited rides at a discount offered by EMU. You must present your student or employee I.D. card when you purchase your pass.
**University of Michigan:** Active students, faculty and staff at U-M and Michigan Medicine have unlimited access to TheRide's fixed-route bus service with a valid yellow Mcard. To take advantage of your sponsored ride, swipe your valid yellow Mcard when you board the bus. Your valid yellow Mcard will serve as your bus pass.

*Visit the AATA Office at 2700 S. Industrial Hwy, Ann Arbor to enroll for reduced fares. Visit their website at* theride.org *for more information.*

**AATA'S "A-RIDE"**
734-996-0400
Serves the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti Area. Offers door-to-door transportation for people with disabilities who struggle to use the fixed route system. Rides must be reserved in advance. An application is required and can be found at www.theride.org/services/ride-eligibility and mailed or delivered in-person to the AATA office.

**PEOPLE'S EXPRESS**
877-214-6073
Within Washtenaw County, People's Express serves the residents of Northfield Township and Saline. Offers a Michigan Medicine commuter route. Fare is determined by time of day, starting point and destination. Call between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m., Monday-Friday, to reserve a ride. More information can be found at peoplesexpress.org

**MICHIGAN FLYER**
517-333-0400
Stops in East Lansing, Whitmore Lake, Ann Arbor and Detroit Metro Airport. Ann Arbor stop is at Blake Transit Center. Tickets can be purchased online at michiganflyer.com Tickets must be purchased in advance.

**D2A2**
D2A2 is an express bus service connecting Detroit and Ann Arbor. The service provides hourly trips between the two communities for 16 hours a day during the week (6 a.m.-11 p.m.) and limited service on Saturday and Sunday. Fare purchased at the bus (passengers 2-64 yrs): $8 one way. Online booking discount (passengers 2-64 yrs): $6. Eligible senior/disability fare: $4. Infants 24 months and younger ride free. Tickets are non-refundable. Two free changes are allowed up to five minutes prior to your scheduled departure. *Make reservation at* d2a2.com/

**RIDE THE WAVE**
734-475-9494
Call Center: Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Door-to-door throughout Western Washtenaw to anywhere in Washtenaw County, Chelsea—Dexter—Ann Arbor fixed route Connectors, Downtown Chelsea free shuttle, Discounts for older people, people with disabilities, low income, and children through 12th grade. ridethewavebus.org

Need help with your pet?
Pet food pantry
Vet care
Temporary boarding
and more
FRIENDS FOR LIFE
Humane Society of Huron Valley
Helping keep pets with their people
(734) 661-3550

## WINTER PROGRAM INFORMATION
## DAY TIME WARMING SHELTER LOCATIONS:

| Location | Address | Dates Available |
|---|---|---|
| Ypsilanti Freighthouse (Mon.- Thur., 8am-6pm) | 100 Market Place Ypsilanti | Nov. 10, 2025 - March 31, 2026 |
| Delonis Center (Weekends only) | 312 W. Huron St. Ann Arbor | Nov. 10, 2025 - April 14, 2026 |
| Zion Lutheran Church | 1510 Hill St., Ann Arbor | Nov. 10, 2025 - Nov. 21, 2025 |
| Ann Arbor Friend's Meeting | 1420 Hill St. Ann Arbor | Dec. 9, 2025 - Jan. 3, 2025 |
| Ann Arbor Day Site | TBD | Dec. 8, 2025 - Jan. 9, 2026 |
| St. Mary's Student Parish | 331 Thompson St. Ann Arbor | Jan. 5, 2026 - Jan. 30, 2026 |
| First Congregational Church | 608 E. Williams St. Ann Arbor | Feb. 2, 2026 - Feb. 13, 2026 |
| First Baptist Church | 517 E. Washington St. Ann Arbor | Feb. 16, 2026 - March 27, 2026 |

*All Washtenaw County office building lobbies are available as warming center sites during normal business hours.*

Unless otherwise specificed, all above warming shelters operate Monday through Friday during normal business hours. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact the Delonis Center at **734-662-2829**. For updates, visit **bit.ly/washtenaw-warming**.

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Last updated: 11/5/25

## OVERNIGHT SHELTER INFORMATION

**Winter shelter information:** Winter daytime and overnight shelter accommodations are available throughout the winter shelter season from **November 10, 2025 - April 14, 2026** for any individual seeking emergency shelter during the cold winter months.

- **Daytime shelter** - Monday - Thursday, 8am - 6pm at the Ypsilanti Freighthouse (100 Market Place, Ypsilanti, MI 48198)
- **Overnight shelter** - Nighttime accommodations are at the Delonis Center; 312 W. Huron St., Ann Arbor, and at offsite locations including Congregation partners throughout the County, and there is an overnight shelter in Ypsilanti. During day-time hours, those seeking overnight shelter should first contact HAWC to obtain a referral for shelter at 734-961-1999.

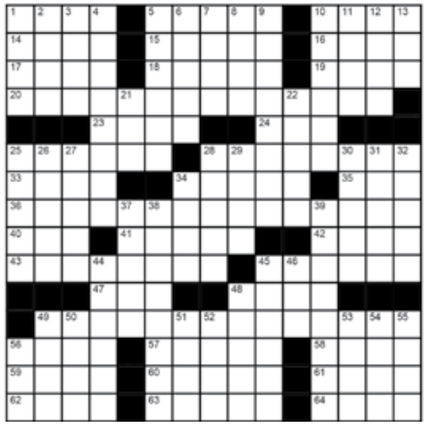
**How do I get into the shelter?**
Any individuals or families seeking emergency shelter please contact Housing Access of Washtenaw County (HAWC) at 734-961-1999 to obtain a referral to the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County (individuals), Alpha House (families), & SafeHouse (survivors). If it is after 5pm or weekend, if you're an individual, please come to or call the Delonis Center (734-662- 2829) and we'll assist serving you. Families, please come to or call Alpha House for assistance anytime at 734-822-0220.

**What is provided at the shelter?**
Individuals are provided a safe place to sleep each night and can access a wide variety of services including meals, case management, medical care, and most importantly help finding permanent housing.

**For updates and more information:**
**bit.ly/washtenaw-warming**

# CROSSWORD

*International Network of Street Papers*



**ACROSS**
**1. Candy, informal**
**5. In base 8**
**10. Worked the soil**
**14. On or to the left**
**15. Choice**
**16. A rounded knob or protuberance**
**17. Black cat, maybe**
**18. Consumed**
**19. Barbecue entree**
**20. Creative activity in front of an audience**
**23. "-zoic" things**
**24. Oolong, for one**
**25. Legislative assembly of Spain and formerly Portugal**
**28. A shore onto which a ship could be blown in foul weather**
**33. Came down**
**34. -myalgia, debilitating condition**
**35. ___ green**
**36. Device that performs operations, usually in binary notation**
**40. "The Three Faces of ___"**
**41. "Encore!"**
**42. "Scream" star Campbell**
**43. A system for broadcasting words on TV**
**45. Covered in slices of bacon**
**47. Amigo**
**48. Boat in "Jaws"**
**49. Descriptions of something as admirable**
**56. English spelling for the capitol of Shaanxi province**
**57. Exploits**
**58. ___ gin fizz**
**59. ___ brat**
**60. Harvard, Yale, Brown, etc.**
**61. Cork's country**
**62. ...**
**63. Like some goodbyes**
**64. Gets into**

**DOWN**
**1. Hoof sound**
**2. Blood pigment**
**3. "Your turn"**
**4. Colored paper thrown at celebration**
**5. Met productions**
**6. Forces something into an insuffcient space**
**7. South American monkey**
**8. "Absolutely!"**
**9. Not shortsided**
**10. Cry of triumph**
**11. Bypass**
**12. Declines**
**13. Affairs**
**21. Bauxite, e.g.**
**22. "Belling the Cat" author**
**25. Citadel student**
**26. Antipasto morsel**
**27. Star in Orion**
**28. Allowed**
**29. Black, in poetry**
**30. ___ out (declined)**
**31. "The Canterbury Tales" pilgrim**
**32. Dog-___**
**34. Cultivated for its linseed and textile fiber**
**37. Golden Horde member**
**38. "You must be at least 21 to drink alcohol"**
**39. Made without yeast**
**44. Namesake for a discovery**
**45. Tastelessly showy or loud**
**46. Appear**
**48. Boorish or aggresive person, especially an Australian man**
**49. Copter's forerunner**
**50. Dalai ___**
**51. The Jackson-**
**52. Hip bones**
**53. Assortment**
**54. Norse goddess of fate**
**55. Attends**
**56. "Do the Right Thing" pizzeria owner**

by Tommy Spaghetti

## Sudoku ★★★★☆☆ 4puz.com

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 9 | 1 | 3 | 6 | | | | |
| 4 | | 6 | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | 8 | | 6 | 5 | |
| | | | | | 4 | | 7 | |
| 1 | 2 | | 5 | | 6 | | 4 | 8 |
| | 4 | | 7 | | | | | |
| | 5 | 3 | | 7 | | | | 4 |
| | | | | | | 2 | | 6 |
| | | | | 9 | 3 | 7 | 1 | |

Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

## PUZZLE SOLUTIONS *November 14, 2025 edition*

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 9 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 1 |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 6 |
| 1 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 7 | 9 | 2 |
| 6 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 1 | 3 |
| 3 | 9 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 4 |
| 9 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 7 |
| 4 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 8 |
| 8 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 5 |



# November is diabetes awareness month

**WILL SHAKESPEARE**
**Groundcover vendor No. 258**

Before 1982, Diabetes Awareness Month had been broadcast and promoted in the month of October. However, in 1982, President Ronald Reagan designated November as a national Diabetes Awareness Month. Diabetes is a serious medical issue, and about 34.8 million Americans are currently diagnosed with it. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institute for Health (NIH) have reported that one out of three Americans are at risk of developing diabetes. They also reported that about three percent of American teenagers have the risk of being diagnosed as pre-diabetic.

What is pre-diabetes? According to the National Institute of Health website: "Prediabetes is a precursor before the diagnosis of diabetes mellitus. Adults with prediabetes often show no signs or symptoms of diabetes but will have blood sugar levels higher than normal. The normal blood glucose level is between 70 mg/dL to 99 mg/dL. In patients with prediabetes, you can expect to see blood glucose levels elevated between 110 mg/dL to 125 mg/dL."

We do want to focus on the definition and explanations for diabetes 1 and 2. According to the NIH and CDC: "Type 1 diabetes is a chronically progressive autoimmune disease that affects approximately 1% of the population in the developed world. This adverse immune response is induced and promoted by the interaction of both genetic and environmental factors. In contrast, in type 2 diabetes, insulin resistance coupled with reduced insulin output is the primary cause of hyperglycaemia (affecting approximately 8.5% of the adult population)."

What are CDC experts saying about prevalence and prevention of diabetes?

Prevalence: In the United States, 15.8% of adults have diabetes (11.3% diagnosed and 4.5% undiagnosed). About 1 in 3 American adults (97.6 million) have prediabetes. Prevalence increases with age, among men more than women, and among those who are overweight or have a family history of the disease. Prevalence is higher among certain racial and ethnic groups, such as American Indian and Alaska Native adults (13.6%), non-Hispanic Black adults (12.1%), and Hispanic adults (11.7%).

Prevention: Type 2 diabetes can often be prevented or delayed through lifestyle changes. Losing even a small amount of weight if you are overweight can make a significant difference. Focus on whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Limiting sugar-sweetened beverages is also beneficial. Aim for regular physical activity. The causes of type 1 diabetes are not fully understood, and there is currently no known way to prevent it.

A Stanford University Pediatrician, Alok Patel, recently appeared on ABC News Program which discussed the challenge of diabetes during the Diabetes National Month of Awareness. He noted that 34.8 million Americans are currently suffering from diabetes and every year, 1.2 million Americans are diagnosed with diabetes. He also suggested solutions for combatting the issues of diabetes this holiday season. His prescriptions include being careful about our nutrition and to keep moving. See attached link: abcnews.go.com/Health/video/simple-steps-lower-risk-diabetes-127353807

## Links between obesity and diabetes

There have been a lot of concerns about childhood obesity linking to type 2 diabetes. We would like to share the CDC and NIH reports on that topic.

The prevalence of diabetes increases as a person's BMI goes up (30=obese), making obesity a significant risk factor. Obesity is a leading cause of type 2 diabetes, contributing to nearly 60% of cases.

Obesity can lead to a condition called insulin resistance.High levels of free fatty acids, often found in people with obesity, can negatively affect the insulin-producing beta cells in the pancreas.

The CDC and NIH emphasize that lifestyle changes, such as losing weight and increasing physical activity, can prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes.

Research and public health efforts:

• The CDC identifies obesity as a key modifiable risk factor for type 2 diabetes and promotes healthy eating and physical activity to reduce risk.

• The NIH conducts extensive research into the relationship between obesity and diabetes, including studies on the underlying physiology, the development of new treatments, and the impact of weight loss on related conditions like fatty liver disease.

• The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases has a specific office dedicated to obesity research.

If you have a BMI of 25 or higher, especially with other risk factors like a family history of diabetes, it is recommended to talk to a healthcare provider about diabetes screening. Weight management through healthy eating and physical activity is a crucial step in reducing the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

## Local expert weighs in

I talked to retired University of Michigan medical doctor and research scientist, Dr. "Mad" Max. He is one of the volunteers at Groundcover News along with his wife, Mary. We did an interview at the Groundcover News Office on November 20, 2025.

**WS:** What do you think about November as the National Diabetes Awareness Month?

**Dr. Max:** Seasonal differences are of no use. Making it seasonal is not a value to the population, in terms of diabetes. Secondly, the value of awareness of the two types of diabetes is vastly different. [Why?] Awareness of type 1 is a medical condition for which family history is most important. Awareness of type 2 diabetes has social and economic value to the population because of the importance of obesity to its cause.

**WS:** What is the definition of diabetes?

**Dr. Max:** Type 1 is a disease of insufficient production of the hormone insulin, which enables sugar to be metabolized. It's really glucose. However, people can refer to it as "sugar." Type 2 is the block of the effect of insulin to metabolize sugar. The point is that they are two different diseases. And one is specifically treated with insulin, with predictions of success of the treatment. Type 2's cause is not sufficiently known for a treatment to be predictably successful. The discovery of the hormone insulin and its use in treatment of a younger person with insulin deficiency type 1 was successful — that is, it saved his life. That has become the basis of life-saving treatment of type 1 diabetes.

Type 1 diabetes cannot now be prevented. The emphasis now on research is to obtain the treatments which could prevent type 1 diabetes. In type 1 now, the treatment will be insulin. The goals of research is to obtain treatment which could prevent type 1 diabetes, to prevent failure of the pancreas gland to produce insulin.

**WS:** As we celebrate the national holidays in November, December and January, what should we do to prevent any forms of diabetes?

**Dr. Max:** Focus on whether one has type 1 or type 2 diabetes. Limit the intake of calories to prevent weight gain. Limit what you eat. Watch the calories you eat so that you do not gain weight.

The health team from WRAL News talked to Harvard experts about the best way to avoid Type 2 Diabetes. The doctors said, "Type 2 Diabetes can be avoided by eating better." This expert advice was published by WRAL News (Raleigh, N.C.) on March 1, 2016.

The doctors also said what our local expert Dr. "Mad" Max proclaimed, "Many people are at risk of Type 2 diabetes, but they might not know it." Prudent medical advice is to watch diets and eat better. The doctors recommended some foods and drinks to avoid in order to minimize the risk of type 2 diabetes.

Our readers who want to see the specific recommendations should google "Harvard Experts: To Avoid Type 2 Diabetes, Watch Diets." It is important for our readers to know that there is a close link between diabetes and cardiovascular diseases such as heart problems. Experts from the scientific journal "Seconds Count" offered the following viewpoints, "The relationship between diabetes and CVD is clear, but the causes are complex. High blood glucose levels

see **DIABETES** page 16 ➡

# Roasted butternut squash

**ELIZABETH BAUMAN**
**Groundcover contributor**

**Ingredients:**
2 medium butternut squash (4 to 5 pounds total)
7 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
1/3 cup light brown sugar,
1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
½ teaspoon ground black pepper

**Directions:**

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Cut off the ends of each butternut squash and then peel the squash. Cut in half lengthwise and remove the seeds. Cut the squash into 1 1/4 to 1 1/2-inch cubes.

In a large bowl mix the melted butter, brown sugar, salt, and pepper. Place the cubed squash in a bowl and toss all the ingredients together then spread in a single layer on the baking sheet.

Roast for 45 to 55 minutes, until the squash is tender and the glaze begins to caramelize. While roasting, turn the squash a few times.

Serve warm.

➡ **DIABETES** from page 15

don't fully explain the relationship between diabetes and CVD. People with diabetes also tend to have low-level inflammation of the lining of the arteries, which can interfere with proper function of the blood vessels and make them more susceptible to developing atherosclerotic plaque, where cholesterol and other substances build up in the arteries, limiting the flow of blood to the heart."

The experts continue, "With diabetes, there's also a greater tendency for blood cells to clump together to form clots within the blood vessels. A blood clot that blocks the arteries supplying blood to the heart causes a heart attack, while a blood clot that blocks an artery supplying blood to the brain causes a stroke."

Furthermore, the research work of U-M Sociology alumni and distinguished Public Health Professor Dr. David Williams has shown how social factors like stress, racism and socio-economic status contribute to diabetes and heart diseases.

Happy Holidays! Celebrate wisely!!

➡ **PEER CENTER** from page 11

in." But, bit by bit, he made it further out, until he sat in the park shortly before the start of his rehab. "My mental crisis was a process. I wanted to be able to leave my apartment and go into the city, but that didn't work. It took tiny little steps."

Always being mindful and taking good care of his resources is something that he still has to work on today. "I have my strategies and take good care of myself. If I notice that something is getting too much for me, I back off." Once, after a conversation group, a participant gave him a small porcelain bird — a symbol of taking things step by step.

# My Forever Reason

**MONIQUE CALDWELL**
**Groundcover contributor**

You are special to me
in ways that light cannot measure.

You make me happy like the sunrise,
soft gold spilling across the horizon,
reminding me that each day begins with hope.

You steady me like roots beneath the earth,
holding me firm when storms rage loud.

You are laughter that dances through silence,
a melody that turns ordinary hours into joy.

You are comfort like a blanket in winter,
wrapping me in warmth when the world feels cold.

You are the reason I believe in love's resilience,
the proof that devotion can be both gentle and strong.

You are the spark that makes my heart glow,
the reminder that love is not fleeting, but chosen.

Because I love you,
I see beauty in places I once overlooked,
I find courage in moments I thought I'd falter,
and I carry gratitude for every breath we share.

You are my sunrise, my anchor, my forever reason why—
the one who makes life not just bearable,
but breathtaking.

Fresh ingredients for holiday comfort meals.
Delicious food for everyone.
$5 OFF
ANY PURCHASE OF $30 OR MORE
PEOPLE'S FOOD CO-OP
NATURAL FOODS MARKET
216 N. FOURTH AVENUE ANN ARBOR, MI
PHONE (734) 994 - 9174 • PEOPLESFOOD.COOP
One coupon per transaction. Must present coupon at the time of purchase. Coupon good for in-store only. No other discounts or coop cards apply. Not valid for gift cards, case purchases, beer or wine.
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